



490 N. Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901

January 25, 2022

## Scoping Notice

### Re: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks land proposal

Dear Interested Party:

#### **Proposed Project Description**

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) may be preparing an Environmental Analysis on a proposal to purchase a conservation easement within Lincoln, Flathead, and Sanders counties, Montana. FWP is working with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and SPP Montana, LLC (SPP) and Green Diamond Resource Company (Green Diamond) on a proposed project to place approximately 113,951 acres of productive timberland in northwest Montana around the Thompson Chain of Lakes under conservation easement (see attached map). The proposed conservation easement, to be held by FWP, would allow SPP and Green Diamond to retain ownership of these timberlands, preclude development, protect important wildlife habitat and key landscape connectivity, and provide public access and associated recreational opportunities. The U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, Habitat Montana, and grant funding raised by TPL would be likely funding sources if this proposal were to proceed to completion.

This project would conserve key winter range and a movement corridor for elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, and moose, provide critical habitat for grizzly bear and Canada lynx, federally threatened species found on the property, and protect streams for westslope cutthroat trout and Columbia River redband trout, both Montana species of concern. Conservation easement terms would preclude the human-wildlife conflicts that come with residential development of properties within wildlife habitat, especially those with grizzly bears, black bears, and mountain lions. The property currently provides over 121,000 days per year of public hunting and angling that would be secured in perpetuity under this proposal. The project borders the Thompson Chain of Lakes State Park, the 142,000-acre Thompson-Fisher Conservation Easement, and the 100,000-acre US Fish and Wildlife Service's Lost Trail Conservation Area as well as the Kootenai National Forest and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation lands.

#### **Project Objectives**

The primary objectives of this conservation easement project include:

- Preserving important wildlife habitat and a movement corridor;

- Providing public recreational access; and
- Allowing the property to be sustainably managed for timber production.

**Public Involvement and Process**

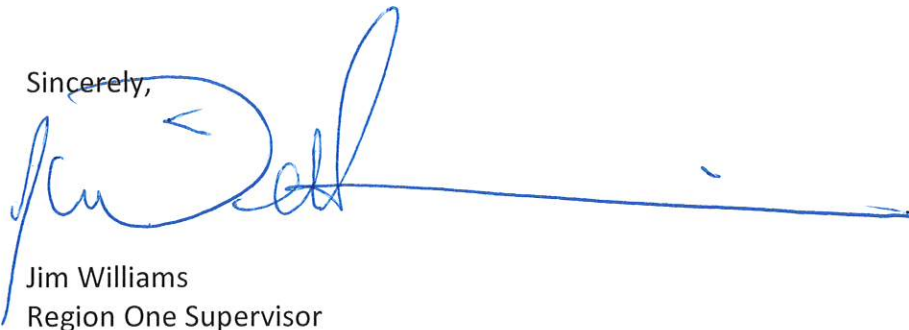
The 30-day comment period will begin on February 2, 2022. Please submit either written or e-mailed comments by 5:00 pm March 4, 2022 to:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Chris Hammond, Wildlife Mitigation Program Supervisor  
Re: Proposed Conservation Easement  
490 N. Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
[chammond@mt.gov](mailto:chammond@mt.gov)

Comments received from this preliminary evaluation will help FWP determine public interest, identify potential issues that would require further analysis, and may provide insight for refining the proposal or for developing and analyzing one or more alternatives. Upon completion of the preliminary evaluation, FWP will determine next steps, which may include conducting an environmental analysis with additional opportunity for public input or taking no further action on the proposed project.

If you have any questions regarding this project or preliminary evaluation process, please contact Chris Hammond at (406) 751-4595 or via email at [chammond@mt.gov](mailto:chammond@mt.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim Williams', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Williams  
Region One Supervisor



